

Fourth-term Human Resources Planning Commission convenes second meeting (with photo)

The Chief Secretary for Administration, Mr Chan Kwok-ki, today (June 16) chaired the second meeting of the fourth-term Human Resources Planning Commission.

At the meeting, Mr Chan, also the Chairman of the Committee on Education, Technology and Talents (CETT), introduced the CETT's work to the members. The Chief Executive announced in the 2024 Policy Address the establishment of the CETT, which is responsible for co-ordinating cross-bureau efforts to drive technological innovation, industrial innovation and the co-ordinated development of human resource supply and demand on the basis of strategic positioning and advantages of the "eight centres", while flexibly bringing in and gathering specialised talent from various sectors to build an international hub for high-calibre talent for contributing to the high-quality development of the country and the building of a strong nation. Members exchanged views on how to advance the integrated development of education, technology and talent, and expressed their continued support for the relevant work of the CETT.

The Education Bureau (EDB) at the meeting introduced to members the work on promoting the development of universities of applied sciences (UAS). In pursuance of the strategy to develop vocational and professional education and training (VPET) through fostering industry-institution collaboration and diversified development, the EDB announced in February 2024 the criteria for qualifying as a UAS and allocated a start-up fund of \$100 million to support the establishment of the Alliance of UAS (the Alliance) in November of the same year, with a view to promoting the development of UAS in Hong Kong. The Hong Kong Metropolitan University and Saint Francis University went through stringent procedures last year and successfully became the first two UAS in Hong Kong. Members supported the Government's continued efforts in promoting the innovative development of VPET, and provided opinions on the relevant work and work plan of the Alliance.

In addition, the Security Bureau also briefed members on the measures to facilitate the southbound and northbound two-way flow of Mainland and Hong Kong high-end talent, which include exit endorsements for talent and business visits to enable Mainland residents to travel to Hong Kong, as well as multiple-entry visas and the Mainland Travel Permit for Hong Kong and Macao Residents (non-Chinese Citizens) to benefit non-Chinese Hong Kong residents travelling to the Mainland. Members were pleased to note that these measures would enhance the Guangdong-Hong Kong-Macao Greater Bay Area (GBA)'s strategic planning on the mobility of talent and expedite the development of a talent hub in the GBA, fully reflecting Hong Kong's distinctive advantages of being closely connected to the world with the strong support of the

motherland under the "one country, two systems" framework.

Members were also briefed by the Labour and Welfare Bureau on the arrangements for admission of professionals of specified skilled trades to Hong Kong. The new arrangements, formulated under the CETT's steer, allows young and experienced non-degree professionals to apply for entry into Hong Kong under the General Employment Policy and the Admission Scheme for Mainland Talents and Professionals to join eight skilled trades facing acute manpower shortages. Applicants are required to be non-degree professionals meeting the relevant qualifications as specified in the Technical Professional List, and be aged between 18 and 40. The new channel will accept applications starting June 30 for a period of three years, with an overall quota of 10 000, with the quota for each skilled trade limited to 3 000. Members welcomed the new arrangements, and anticipated that this measure would effectively address the shortage of mid-level technical professionals and inject new impetus into the relevant trades.

